THE REFLECTION. A POEM.

By JOHN MAXWELL, *Author of a Play, call'd,* VIRTUE *in* Diſtreſs. The Author being Blind.

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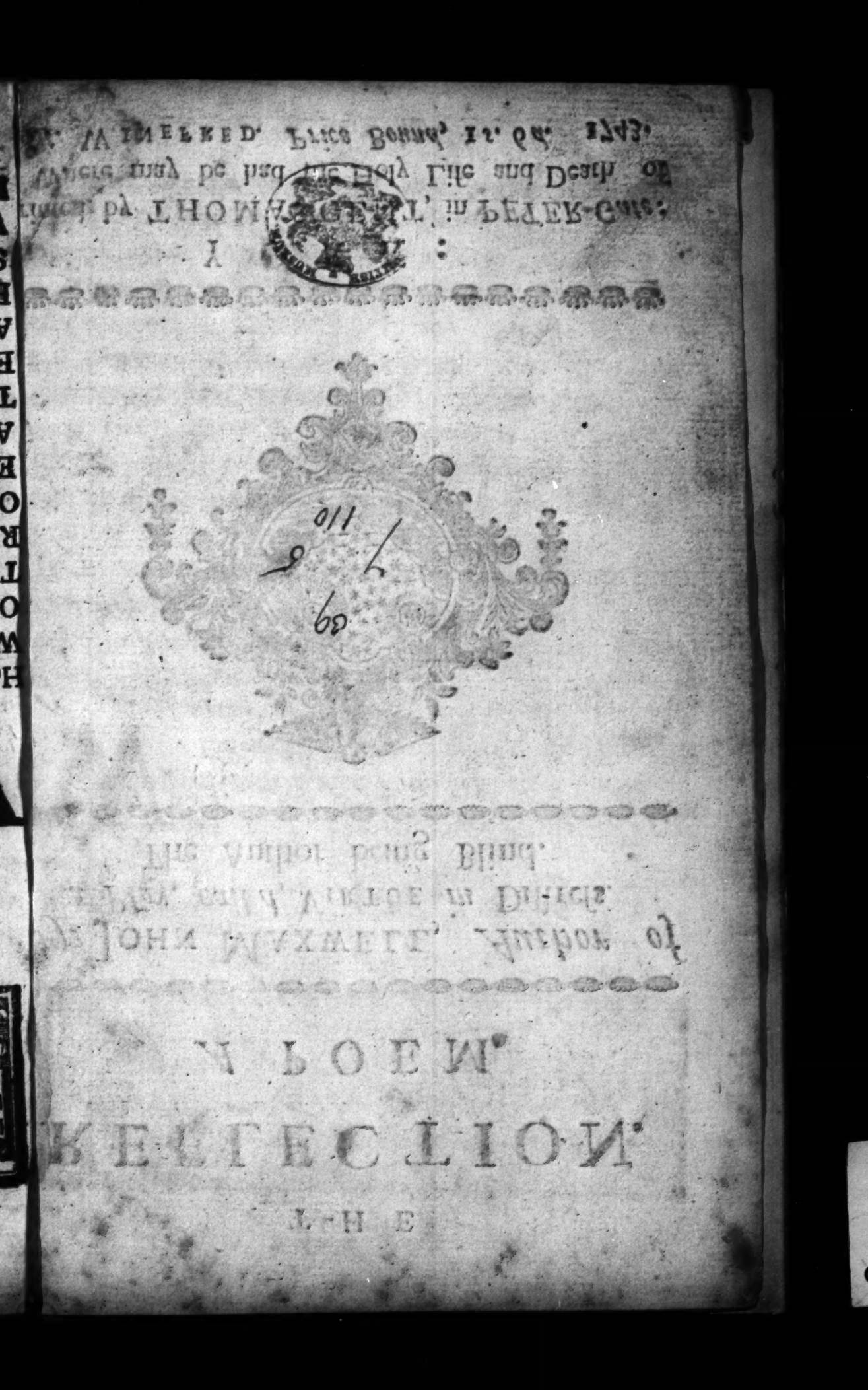

THE REFLECTION.

WHen, at the firſt, good Heav'n created Man,
And, while he kept his native Purity,
He needs muſt much enjoy of thoſe Delights
Such as this Proſpect gives.
Heav'n plac'd him in a Garden; for ſuch Scenes
Well ſuit with Innocence; and is a Means
Of height'ning Piety: As Muſick in
The Church enflames our Love, and charms us into Duty.
Reflect my Soul, and take a full Survey
Of all thoſe Wonders that are here diſplay'd;
Extend thy Faculties, let Memory riſe,
And trace each beauteous Bloſſom as it blows;
Then call up Underſtanding to apply
Each Circumſtance, accruing from the Whole:
And, whilſt I gaze upon thoſe Miracles,
Be thou, my Will, determin'd in this Choice,
Steady t'obey that Power, which wrought 'em all;
Which is ſo plainly ſeen in various Ways,
I find it in the Odours of this Morn.

See! yon rich Valley, cover'd o'er with Corn,
Juſt ready for the healthy Reaper's Hand;
How does the Owner ſmile, to ſee his Treaſure!
And calls the Labourers forth:
And now the Widows, and the Orphans come
To gather up the ſcatter'd Ears along:
How does the little Store rejoyce their Hearts!
And where the Mind's religiouſly diſpos'd,
'Tis found more thankful, than a Prince poſſeſs'd
Of Crowns, of Conqueſts, and of Nations Wealth.
Behold that paſturing Ground, and ſee thoſe Sheep,
With ſnowy Fleeces, ready to be ſhorn,
To cloath ſuch Numbers, and to make 'em fine.
And now the Maids come forth to ſeek the Kine.
A pleaſant Sight! to ſee the milky Stream
Which Morn and Evening flows:
I know the Maſter; he's ally'd to Virtue:
And tho' his Roof is humble, Peace dwells there;
Than much to be prefer'd before the Vicious
Great Ones ſhining Gates;
Where only Luſt, and proud Ambition reigns;
Where no good Angels come,
Nought but the wicked Miniſters of Hell.
What tho' embroider'd Velvet deck his Rooms;
And gilded Lamps, with burning Lights of Wax,
Glare all around:
What are his Hopes when all thoſe Things are fled?
Alas! they're none, his Centre's all below:
Heav'n has no Joys for him.
See, that fair Meadow, richly clad with Flow'rs

Of different Kinds; wonderful both in Colours
And in Smell!
How does the ſweet Variety, at once,
Delight my Senſes, and tranſport my Mind
While ſhe contemplates the Hand that made 'em.
And ſee thoſe little cryſtal Drops of Dew
Which ſpangle ev'ry Leaf,
'Till loſt in the Embraces of the Sun.
Then mark thoſe Inſects, with their gawdy Wings,
Bask in its Beams, and feeding on their Sweets:
There flies the Bee with her collected Store.
Say, Infidel, how does ſhe find her Home
When at this Diſtance,
Over ſuch crooked Paths, and Tracts of Ground?
Reaſon ſhe's none, and yet ſhe travels on
As tho' ſhe underſtood:
Does not this plainly ſhew a Power Divine?
Hark! from yon neighbouring Church a Sound for Death!
Now change the Scene, and let Reflection turn
On Objects full of Sadneſs. This, perhaps,
Proclaims ſome Sinner is convinc'd, how much
He was deceiv'd, by acting all his Crimes;
And now he plainly ſees he liv'd an *Atheiſt*:
Tho' he never ſpent one Hour in Argument,
Might hurt his Neighbour's Faith:
Yet by no thinking was as much an Infidel;
Nor could, in all his Life, one Day be found
In which he might with Juſtice tell his Heart,
He did believe a God;
'Till this ſad Change ſhews him in his Confuſion.

In Or

Or it may be one of another Claſs,
Who falſly thought (becauſe he did no Harm)
He ſure was ſafe; when ev'ry good by him
Was quite forgot, tho' much was in his Power.
Who ſpent his Days, in moſt infamous Eaſe,
(In what the World calls Elegance in Life;)
In Dreſs, and every empty vain Amuſement.
O! how undreſt does now that Soul appear!
How is it pain to ſee thoſe happy Spirits!
Whom he much diſpis'd for being poor;
When every Vertue ſhone conſpicuous there:
He cannot bear their Smiles; but, to avoid the Sight,
He plunges lower in the Shades of Night.
But ſince 'tis poſſible, this Sound may be
The happy Herald for ſome good Man's Death,
Now view his lateſt Hours, and ſee what ſweet
Reflection fills his Breaſt.
Behold him juſt like one eſcap'd a Storm,
Whom the tempeſtuous Waves of Life has toſt,
Now finds himſelf ſecured by a Calm;
Even in the Calm of Death.
No more he fears the proud Man's haughty Frown,
No more ſhall Poverty perplex his Breaſt
With all her Train of Ills; they all are fled.
And now, they give a Reliſh to his Joys.
Methinks I hear his Guardian Spirit ſay,
" A! thou Afflicted! lift thy Head, and ſee,
" What Joys are here prepar'd, here waits for thee;
" A Recompence for all that Faith and Love
" Thy Patience did produce."

In this laſt Conflict, thus he chears his Soul,
'Till, in a pious Groan, he is diſſolv'd;
And, borne on Angel's Wings, he ſoars on high
To dwell ſecure in everlaſting Peace.
Sweet Meditation! ſee how, unobſerv'd,
I've reach'd this Church-Yard, here's a Field for thought!
Now let the Ambitious come, and view this Scene,
And tell me if it will not cure this Pride,
When he reflects upon this mingled Maſs,
Which here lies wrap'd beneath thoſe Beds of Turf.
A gloomy Proſpect for the Rich and Proſp'rous,
Who have no Faith, nor e'er poſſeſs'd one Vertue,
When they reflect that ſhortly this ſhall be
Their Portion; and that they muſt leave their Pomp
To mix with Worms and Duſt. What then will all
Their large Poſſeſſions do?
They cannot ſave 'em from thoſe loathſome Dews,
Which dreſs the Face in Death; nor chaſe away
Thoſe Worms that eat their Fleſh. What then will Pride
Avail? Or all thoſe ruſted Treaſures which they hid;
Ev'n when the Lamp of Life was well nigh waſted,
As tho' they could renew a Spring of Youth,
And make that Spring immortal. O ſtrange Forgetfulneſs!
Not to remember Death is each Man's Lot,
And that the Prince and Peaſant then are equal!
But ſtill, more ſad, is that Forgetfulneſs,
Which hides this Knowledge from us;
How all thoſe Graves ſhall open, and that we
Muſt then account for all that we have done.
What then is Grandeur, Titles, Wealth or Power?

They cannot aid us, and in vain they call
To them for Help; they only ſerve to feed
Their Vices, and are vaniſh'd all.
It matters not how ſumptuouſly we've far'd,
How richly dreſs'd, or what Sums we have told,
What Lands poſſeſs'd, how fine our Company;
Theſe only ſerve for to augment their Grief,
And make 'em curſe their Folly did permit
Such gilded Trifles to undo 'em quite:
Whilſt with Diſtreſs, and Anguiſh they ſurvey
Thoſe poor Indigent Ones, whom they ſo ſcorn'd,
Which they refus'd to ſuccour;
Whilſt they with Patience did endure Life's Storm,
Chuſing to ſuffer, rather than to eaſe
Themſelves, by any Means unjuſt.
Now, they behold 'em ſhine, with Angels Brightneſs;
Whilſt they themſelves are ſunk in endleſs Woe.
Here let the Am'rous come, and think a while,
And tho' he but in Fancy ſhall ſurvey
One half conſumed Body, (Once, perhaps,
As fair as ſhe who like Enchantment binds
His Soul faſt in the Chains of Death) This needs
Muſt cure, or elſe diſband, his Flame: And then,
He ſure will own, 'tis Madneſs ſtrange to loſe
Eternal Happineſs, for ſuch a ſhort-liv'd Joy:
'T may be To-morrow's Sun may ſee him dreſt
A ſad Inhabitant for thoſe dark Cells.
Here let afflicted Innocence repair
To find an Antidote for their Diſtreſs.

If 'twill not cure, it muſt allay their Sorrows,
However ſharp and numerous they be,
When they reflect, that but a little longer,
And here, their Griefs will end;
If Poverty occaſions their Diſtreſs,
Remember what Advantages it has;
It ſaves us from thoſe ſharp Anxieties,
Which oft perplex the Rich.
At each ſad Circumſtance concerning Death,
It makes us apt to long for an Hereafter;
So is an Inlett to thoſe Rays of Joy,
Which oft refreſh the virtuous Sufferer;
An Earneſt of that Bliſs ſhall crown their Virtues
Virtues the Rich are wholly Strangers to,
Nor can indeed perform.
Ah! that's a Grave for him,
Who at *Meliſſa*'s Lodgings uſed to ſing,
And warbled like an Angel;
How ſudden was his Death? Sudden, indeed!
For Yeſterday I ſaw the lovely Youth,
Juſt as I have obſerv'd a new blown Flower,
Dreſt in its Virgin Sweetneſs;
And ſpread, in all its Beauties, in the Sun;
When, preſently, a heavy Show'r deſcends,
And the big Drops deſtroy its utmoſt Pride,
Quite break the Stalk, and leave it languiſhing
To dye in Duſt.
This grave Reflection (with the Mother's Grief)
Caus'd me to weep, until this Thought aroſe,
Which made me mingle Tears of Joy, to think

How early he was freed from a bad World,
From all the Ills that's incident to Life;
But chiefly from the dangerous Snares of Sin.
Who knows (ſaid I) but if he'd liv'd a Man
Some fav'rite darling Guilt had robb'd his Soul
Of all that Happineſs it now enjoys?
For ſuch, alas! (tho' the Reflection's ſad)
Such Ignorance and Wickedneſs prevail,
That, when I do behold one of his Age,
(That is, when Reaſon juſt begins to dawn)
Ah! then, I fear leſt he ſhould enter the
Unthinking Road; and loſe himſelf amongſt
The thoughtleſs Crowd.
Now he is ſafe, prevented from much Ill;
And what Heav'n does prevent, there we are free;
But ev'ry virtuous Act we wou'd perform,
(Tho' never in our Power) Heav'n will as ſure
Reward, as tho' it was indeed by us
Perform'd.
That Thought of His was wiſe, who did adviſe,
To let our Sorrow reſt but 'till to Morrow;
For then (ſays he) it will lye down it ſelf.
Juſt ſo Time works in ev'ry ſad Event;
Our Virtue then conſiſts in managing
The preſent Minutes well: For ev'ry Morning
Brings us an Allay;
And tho' the Means are ſlow, yet they are ſure;
And Time will certainly effect a Cure.
It was my own Affection did produce
This Contemplation; for in yonder Vault

There

There lies interr'd the Aſhes of my MOTHER.
'Tis now ſome Years ſince firſt I knew that Sorrow;
A Sorrow ever dreaded, and ſo ſharp!
I cou'd not then
Attend her to her Tomb, and bid farewell;
But now I can think calmly on her Death,
And will deſcend, and view thoſe dear Remains,
O! much *Belov'd*! Now let me recollect
Each tender Circumſtance, that fed my Fondneſs;
Which, join'd with Nature, is of mighty Force
From whence then ſhall I date This pleaſing Spring?
Ev'n from that Moment when Heav'n breath'd this Flame,
And Life gave Motion to me in the Womb,
Leaving that Sacred Vale was kindly born
In Thoſe dear Arms, and nouriſh'd from That Breaſt;
Pleas'd with Thy Voice, and by Thy Fondneſs chear'd;
When, tim'rous as a Fly, that Boſom was
A ſweet Preſervative in all my Fears.
Still as my Days increas'd, and Trouble grew,
My reſtleſs Hours was ſoftned all by Thee;
And ev'ry Sorrow huſh'd by Thee to reſt.
Then, as my Years came on, my Wants yet more,
Thy Love did like a friendly Show'r deſcend,
Cauſing much Tenderneſs to grow for Thee;
But ſure this Tenderneſs and Gratitude
Did never higher riſe, than for Thy Care,
In teaching me to be in Love with Virtue.
Conducted thus 'till grown mature with Age,
My Underſtanding capable to give,
And to receive the Sweets of friendly Converſe,

And taſte thoſe Pleaſures *Reading* doth afford:
Thus I was bleſt in Thee. But Thou, alas!
Art fled, and all that now remains, is but
This heap of Duſt. —— O! can That beauteous Form,
That was ſo fair, endow'd with ſuch a Mind,
Be *Nothing*? That, indeed, were ſad!
Then knock at Reaſon's Gate to be inform'd:
Reaſon abhors the Thought, and doth diſplay
Much Argument to prove, that Thought is vain.
But was this all the Certainty we found,
Had not good Heav'n vouchſaf'd thoſe gracious Words,
That he who does believe, ſhall never die,
How languid were our Hopes? Now, how ſure?
But what is this to the unthinking World?
They hear it as a Tale that's long been told.
That does unfold ſtrange Things:
But when its Precepts do require Obedience,
They hold themſelves excus'd; becauſe they are
Not certain of its Truth.
They never ſaw't, they ſay, nor thoſe that told it.
Thus much their Lives declare: And this, I fear,
Concerns more, many more, than thoſe
Abandon'd Wretches, drunk with Sin, who ranſack
Earth and Sea to act with Greedineſs
All kinds of Ill: And, like th' Apoſtate Angels,
Bid Defiance to all Heav'n's righteous Laws
As tho' they were in love with Flames and Death.
Theſe are but few compar'd to thoſe, who never
Launch amidſt ſuch dangerous Waves; but are
So loſt to what a pious Chriſtian's Faith

 Diſplays:

Diſplays: It cannot but ſurprize.
Alas! they find ſo many Ways to Sin,
Which Privacy can eaſily conceal:
And others never judg'd by human Laws,
Which Frequency of Practice keep from Shame:
Pleaſure is their chief Purſuit; and they receive
Each Benefit juſt as the Brute which crops
The faireſt Flower; but ne'er admires, nor thanks
The Hand that made it.
Reading they hate; it interrupts their Joy.
Reading, that ſweet Refreſhment of the Soul,
From whence ſo many Benefits do flow;
Which can at once Delight, Inſtruct, Excite
The Mind to worthy Actions.
Books are like Friends that ſerve us in our Need;
He has a mighty Bleſſing that enjoys 'em:
And now I will examine my own Heart,
By asking it this Queſtion: Can we not then
Be ſure of nothing which our Senſes do
Not prove? I'm ſatisfy'd we may; and this
To me will prove it. Do I believe
The Story of our *Royal Martyr*'s Death?
As ſure as I believe I view this Monument:
And not to do ſo wou'd indeed be Folly;
And yet I never ſaw one Circumſtance
Relating to his Sufferings; nor any who
Was Witneſs of that Cruelty.
Can we not then as readily believe
The Hiſtory of our bleſt Redeemer's Death,
And give our firm Aſſent to all thoſe Truths

His

His ſacred Records tell? O! but, they ſay,
That is ſo long ago; Compariſon
Is odious. What tho' there is
Such Difference as to Time,
That's no ſuch Difficulty as they pretend:
I have known ſome who've liv'd an Hundred Years;
And when thoſe Perſons firſt appear'd in Life,
'Tis certain there were others then as old;
And ſo from Age to Age it might be reckon'd,
Ev'n 'till *Auguſtus* Time. So This is but
The Lives of Se'vnteen Men: Then ſhall we ſuffer
That weak Snare to hold us? 'Tis true, Faith
Is a Vertue; and, when That is perform'd,
Of Conſequence we muſt reſiſt Temptation.
But this Temptation ſeems, I think, to flow
Chiefly from Ignorance; at leaſt amongſt
The common Sort of Men, who careleſly
Neglect thoſe happy Opportunities,
That bleſs this Land.
How eaſily we do receive, as true,
The Writings of the old Philoſophers,
Which bear a longer Date; but that may be
Becauſe they have no Pow'r to threaten Puniſhment:
And, in this Caſe,
The Devil tempts us not: He cares not whether
We believe, or no: He knows we muſt have more
Than they can ſhow, if we defeat his Malice.
But he, who with an honeſt Mind ſhall read
The ſacred Pages, muſt (as one obſerves)
Confeſs they've in them a Self-Evidence,

Which

Which proves their Words are true.
Conſider but the Majeſty they bear,
The Wonders they unfold, the Knowledge, all
Their heav'nly Doctrines yield! They help all Writings
That are Friends to Virtue; but none was ever
Like 'em: Then he, that will but take the Pains
To read, may plainly ſee Heav'n has afforded Means
(More than enough) to prove the Certainty
Of Chriſtain Faith.
Conſider but the Churches Preſervation,
In all paſt Ages, ſo wonderful, that ev'n,
To this Day, in ſeveral Parts, they eaſily
Can reckon a plain and right Succeſſion of
Its Biſhops, even from the Apoſtles Time.
And ever ſince they taught, the World has been
Bleſt with the Works of Good and Holy Men,
Both to defend and to explain thoſe Truths.
Nay, ev'ry little Period of Time,
Has been adorn'd with ſomething of this Nature.
Conſider, too, what Numbers there have been,
Who all have dy'd, for to maintain this Cauſe:
Nay, ev'n thoſe wicked *Hereſies*, that took
Their Riſe, whilſt in its Infancy, is now
A Means to prove its Certainty.
Well, then, in thoſe bleſt Writings, I do read
That Thou ſhalt live again; nay, Thou doth live;
And if Thou lives, then Thou remembers me;
Becauſe the Soul is conſcious of her Deeds
Done in the Body: Then, ſure, that Goodneſs Thou
Beſtow'd on me, now brings Thee ſweet Reflection.

And, if good Heav'n diſpenſes thee the Power,
Thou ſtill will help me, even till that Time
That I ſhall be diſſolv'd; or that great Day
Appear, when Thou ſhalt riſe, array'd in Robes
Of Light, all Glorious to behold! And with
Such Faculties, ſo fitted to receive
Such wonderous Delight, as dazzles Thought
When it attempts Deſcription.
Chear'd by this Hope, I will but ſhed one Tear,
One ſilent Tear, in grateful Tribute to
Thy Memory; and then aſcend to view
Yon verdant Hills, adorn'd with Springs:
Thoſe never ceaſing Springs, which, bubling wind
Themſelves along this Plain, and form a pleaſing Scene.
Now mark thoſe Trees, and their delicious Fruit,
With bluſhing Cheeks that ripen to the Sun;
And liſten to the ſweet harmonious Sound
Of all that vaſt Variety of Birds,
Which hop from Bough to Bough with painted Wings,
Warbling forth their ſweet melodious Songs.
See others buſy making of their Neſts:
This picks a Straw, and that a Feather bears.
Can this be done by Choice?
O! no, for they are ignorant of the End.
Can Chance produce it then?
No, 'tis the ſecret Hand of Heav'n that guides 'em.
And Theſe are Miracles as great as That,
When the Dove pluck'd the Olive Leaf, while yet
The Flood remain'd: Or when the Ravens bore
The Prophet Food Morning and Evening;

Only

Only their Frequency makes them no more
Admir'd, by careleſs, dull, ungrateful Men.
For, ſure, it is amazing to obſerve
How very few can reliſh thoſe Delights,
Which flow from Obſervations of this Nature.
Senſual Enjoyments are their only Aim,
Which rob the Soul of all that Share of Happineſs
That riſe from ſuch Reflection.
And ſure the wiſe Man's Words are much diſpis'd
Amongſt the fooliſh Great Ones in high Life,
When he declares, A pleaſant Thing it is
To ſee the Sun: Their Pleaſure is in Night,
And Glare of Candles.
The Day they ſleep in; and 'tis found too ſhort
For Time to dreſs againſt the next grand Meeting;
Where they enjoy a World of Pride and Finery,
A deal of Play, and nautious Flattery.
The Sun is fickly, and grows irkſome to 'em.
They care not to behold the vaſt Variety
Which ſhine thro' all Heav'n's Works; and makes the Soul
To be in Love with Virtue.
A melancholly Scene it needs muſt be,
To view one of theſe Perſons at their Death,
When all thoſe Things are uſeleſs:
And the Remembrance of thoſe vain Delights,
This Round of Pleaſures, can afford no Comfort:
They never purchas'd 'em the ſmalleſt Favour
In the Court of Heav'n.
They hinder'd all their Pray'rs, and all their Praiſes;
And only ſerv'd to make 'em proud and cruel,

In not relieving the Afflicted's Wants,
Becauſe All was to little to ſupport
Such Grandeur. They're Strangers to good Angels:
They all fly 'em: Not one is ready to
Conduct 'em; and the Way they know not: This
Sure muſt needs be ſad.
Others, who move by lower Steps in Life,
(Where groſs and flagrant Crimes are not their Choice)
Yet are as dead to Vertue
For do but interrupt their darling Pleaſures,
Such as ndulge the Taſte and gratifies
The Ears with Noiſe and Trifles, with News and
Much of Scandal, and thoſe fantaſtick Shows,
Which pleaſe the Sight; And all is Night around.
They cannot think; and Solitude is dreadful:
For they behold thoſe Miracles in Nature
With no more Reliſh, than wou'd Cows and Sheep
Have for their Food, if they were fed with Nouriſhment
Unfit. But all this beautiful Creation is
To them as great a Blank as it is to
Thoſe Brutes who have no Underſtanding.
Alas! there are ſuch low and grov'ling Minds
That all thoſe Hours they might improve in Wiſdom,
They'll waſte in Emptineſs,
And Froth, or idle Laughter. If they're viſited
By any Trouble, ſuppoſing Sickneſs,
O! how unſanctify'd is that Affliction;
They'll buy a Charm, to find a Remedy;
They'll throw off Providence, and fix the Year's
Good Fortune, upon a Man's firſt entring

The Houſe, on ſuch, or ſuch a Day,
As wicked Superſtition ſhall point out:
And will be guilty of a Breach of Charity
To purchaſe this Succeſs.
They fancy they are chaſt if they abſtain
From acting of the Crime, in full Dimenſions:
But greedily will ſnatch at ev'ry Pleaſure,
That evil Practice keeps in Countenance.
But let thoſe Traders in that Paſſion know,
They are Pollutions all; which ſtain the Soul,
And ſtand in need to be repented of.
They never pray, but ſometimes come to Church,
But from ſuch Motives as muſt ſure affront
The Majeſty of Heaven; 't may be to ſhow
Their Cloaths, or to' ſee Company, and ſtare
Some grave Ones out of Countenance.
Devotion never warms their frozen Hearts;
Their Time of *Coming* ſhews how cold they are;
But that of *Leaving* it before they end,
Will not admit a Doubt.
'Tis ſhocking to obſerve how ſome behave,
Ev'n in the Midſt of all our ſolemn Worſhip:
(When Angels wait with Joy to bear our Prayers
(If well perform'd) up to the Throne of Mercy;)
They'll be engag'd in Laughter, or Diſcourſe,
Fit only for a Play-Houſe.
To ſee a Perſon quite forſake his Prayer,
To anſwer one who ſhew'd this or that Perſon,
And ſo ingage in talking o'er their Faults,
Or their Misfortunes:

Such Things are monſtrous, but they are too true.
They wiſh to go to Heaven; but not from any
Love they bear to it: For they are ſo immers'd
In earthly Pleaſures, that Heaven to them
Seems ſomething that will riſle all their Joys.
But they are ſenſible, that they muſt dye;
So hope for Heaven, that they may avoid Hell.
Wretched Stupidity! are they ſo blind?
Can they not from theſe Things we here enjoy,
(When us'd without Abuſe) thus much infer;
That He, who made them, can beſtow yet greater,
And hath better Things in Store?
Things which ſo far ſurpaſs ought here we know;
That cou'd we taſte them, and had Power to chuſe
Which we'd poſſeſs; we'd look on theſe as nothing,
When compar'd with ſuch exalted Bliſs.
This they wou'd clearly ſee, was but their Miſt
Of Paſſions once diſpers'd; which cloud the Soul,
And make it impotent to the Attacks
Of Vice. Nor is that Difficulty ſo great
By much of attaining Vertue, as Sin
Would ſuggeſt: Or where's the Inconvenience
Of Temperance? No, rather ſay, has it
Not pleaſant Fruits?
Does it not guard us againſt real Woe,
And heightens each Delight? When Sin does oft
Occaſion more Diſtreſs, than Vertue had produc'd,
If we had journey'd in her ſtraiteſt Paths,
And practis'd all her moſt ſevereſt Rules:
But ſome, we muſt confeſs, is try'd like Gold;

And

And all their Sun is dreſs'd in Clouds and Showers.
Perhaps a ſtrong Temptation they ſhall find,
So cloſely wove with Nature, it may be,
Dear as their Eyes; which, to prevent, and cure,
Heav'n will diſpence another and another
Tryal, equally as ſharp:
Theſe may be Sufferings more than Martyr's Flames.
Heav'n help all ſuch, and yield them ſpecial Aid!
And let them, for their Comfort, be aſſur'd,
That They are dear to Heav'n, and it is gracious,
By thus impow'ring them to give to Heav'n
Ev'n all their Faith, and Love, and their Obedience,
Which Heav'n will much reward; for Heav'n delights
In Bounty.
Theſe ſhine like Stars of the firſt Magnitude,
And are diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt of Men,
As holy Martyrs in their Time of Suff'rings.
O! how my Soul wou'd joy in ſuch a Friend,
Whoſe Actions flow from Virtues pleaſing Stream;
That fears as much to act the ſmalleſt Sin,
When Privacy has drawn a Veil around,
As if expos'd on publick Theatres.
Some ſuch no doubt there is, tho' they ſeem hid
As were thoſe thouſands from the Prophet's View;
Who never bow'd the Knee, nor kiſs'd the Idol.
With ſuch a One I'd rather read a ſmall
Authentick Paſſage of *Jordan*'s neglected Banks,
Than be Partaker of a Birth-Night's Splendor.
Antiquity's a Hand-Maid to Religion,
That ſerves it with Reſpect; and, ſure, of all

Antiquity's

Antiquity's that's known, thoſe that are found
In Thee, unhappy Land! muſt needs afford
Moſt Profit and Delight.
With Tranſport I would climb thy pleaſant Hills,
And liſten to the Warblers of thy Fields;
For they may be the Offspring of thoſe Choirs,
That ſung Heav'n's Praiſe, before the Friend of God
Had pitch'd his Tents upon thy fertile Plains.
How wou'd it glad my Eyes, to view thy Flow'rs!
Thoſe Flow'rs that ſprung from them that did adorn
The Virgin's Path, when ſhe aroſe in haſte
To bear the joyful News an Angel told,
When it pronounc'd her bleſt!
And the fair Propheteſs, in her Abode
Amongſt thoſe verdant Hills, did then reveal
That each ſucceeding Age ſhould ſpeak her ſo.
Then I would bend my Steps, and try to find
That fragrant Field, where once Heav'n's Glory ſhone,
And Angels taught the Church thoſe Words divine,
Which, as they're ſung upon our ſolemn Days,
Do fill the Soul with Rapture and Delight.
Next I wou'd journey in the Shepherd's Road,
Even to *Bethle'em*, where the holy Babe
Diſplay'd a Pattern for Humility;
And taught the World to mortify its Pride:
I'd trace each Foot-Step, ſearch for ev'ry Place,
Where my Redeemer taught and wrought his Wonders,
'Till I arrive at Top of *Calvary*,
There to behold that Rent the Earthquake made,
Which needs muſt fill the Mind with Awe and Wonder.

Then

Then, viſiting the Sepulchre, I'd there
Reflect upon his Triumph over Death ;
And laſt I wou'd aſcend the Holy Mount,
Where, in my Mind, I ſhou'd behold him go
Far above ought we ſee, or ought we know ;
And there I'd pray, that I, at his Return,
Might follow Him with Joy where'er He goes.

Now, from the Summit of thoſe Hills, ſurvey
That watry World, all this ſtupendous Deep ;
Which, when array'd in all his Terrors, is
An Image of Heaven's Juſtice ;
As all thoſe flow'ry Hills, and fruitful Vales,
Are Emblems of his Goodneſs.
Behold ! the awful Motion of the Tide,
How ſolemnly it rowls its Waves along,
As tho' it ſeem'd to threaten to o'erwhelm,
And make a Deluge round. —— See ! now it's kiſs'd
The Shore, and backward turns, as if a Guard
Of Angels did deſcend to ſtop its Progreſs.
Or, rather, at the Voice of Heav'n, it flies :
Which Voice declares, " Here ſhall thy proud Waves ſtay ;
" Theſe are their Bounds, and they ſhall paſs no farther."
O ! cou'd we look into that vaſt Abyſs,
Where all this mighty Weight of Waters lie,
View all the various Forms inhabit there,
The Sight wou'd fill the Soul with Dread and Wonder!
But, now, conſider it as dreſs'd in Storms,
(Perhaps at Midnight) when the Face of Heav'n
Is wrapt in Clouds, and not one Star appears.

Then

Then, when the Tempeſt roars, with hollow Winds
The Surges riſe, and ſwell like Mountains tall.
O dreadful Scene! when the loud Thunder rolls,
And the blue Lightning flaſhes all around!
This is a Figure of a Sinner's Mind,
When Death has ſeiz'd him, and Enjoyments ceaſe,
What are his Horrours then,
When nought but wicked Spirits hover round,
To ſnatch his Soul, and plunge it deep in Hell?
I ſhudder at the Thought!
And, to compoſe my Mind, will recollect,
A moſt delightful Scene I once enjoy'd.
'Twas when the Sun was ſet, and Day Light fled,
The Moon and Stars ſhone forth in all their Luſtre;
The Wind was huſh, and ambient was the Air,
And aromatick Sweets were ſpread around:
I went to view the Beauties of the Night,
And firſt I paſs'd the peaceful Village Street,
Where not one in the Neighbourhood was ſeen;
The Doors were ſhut, and all was faſt aſleep.
This made me think it much reſembled Death:
And thus I ſaid;
Happy thoſe Lab'rours! who thus ſweetly reſt,
If Toil and Innocence have bleſs'd the Day:
They are, I think, a Picture of the Juſt
Wrapp'd in the peaceful Grave;
Who ſlumber 'till awaken'd by that Cry,
"Behold the Bridegroom comes; ariſe to meet
"Him; and with Him partake the Marriage Feaſt."
From thence I came into a Paſture Ground,

Where the firſt Wonder I reflected on,
Was the diſtilling Drops of Dew, that hung
On ev'ry tender Herb and beaureous Flow'r,
That ſeem'd to ſleep 'till open'd by the Sun.
Still paſſing forward, much Delight I found
From various Objects. Sometimes I ſurvey'd
The ſparkling Glow-Worm: Then a grateful Sound
From humming Inſects lodg'd amongſt the Leaves;
And now and then a ſmall Complaint I heard
From out a Neſt hard-by, which made the watchful
Parent flutter round, and ſpread her Wings with Care.
And ever and anon a chearful Note
From Birds on higher Boughs, caus'd by a Dream,
Or the Moon's Brightneſs, they miſtook for Day.
Nigh to all this, lay ſtretch'd upon the Graſs
Some healthy Kine; this nodding, that awake,
The Cud to chew;
Another, which the Heat of Noon-Day's Sun
Had kept from paſturing, riſes to allay
The Pain of Hunger, and does ſweetly feed
Amongſt a thouſand Flowers, ſo wet with Dew,
That Thirſt and Hunger both are ſatisfy'd.
A little further lay ſome harmleſs Ewes,
And tender Lambs; ſome ſucking, ſome aſleep.
And now the nimble Hare did ſquat along,
To ſeek her Food e'er Day and Danger came.
Then I beheld the Beauty of the Moon,
And all thoſe dazling Glories of the Stars!
Theſe Wonders never fail'd to lift my Mind
Higher than all their Heights: There to adore
His Wiſdom and his Power that made 'em all,
And ſtill preſerves them in ſuch Harmony.
Thus wrap'd in Contemplation, I at laſt
Unheeded came into a pleaſant Shade,
Where the ſoft Nightingale's inchanting Sound

Met my charm'd Ears, and gave me new Delight.
Sweet as a Bird in *Paradice* ſhe ſung;
And, as I liſt'ned to the moving Strains,
I in my Fancy thought I heard her ſing:
" Awake, ye drowzy Ones, whom Fumes of Wine,
" Keep on the Confines of Diſeaſe and Death.
" Ariſe, ye Revellers; forſake your Play;
" Fly, fly, ye Wantons! from your lewd Embrace,
" All you, who chuſe thoſe Hours to hide your Shame,
" And hither come, and harken to my Song.
" Come, and behold my Order; and be taught
" To regulate your Lives, for you I ſing:
" You, who are Lords of all this lower World;
" And, if you pleaſe, may ſhare in Joys above:
" Heav'n bids me ſing by Night to ſhew its Pow'r;
" And you may hear I readily obey;
" And yet I have no Promiſe after Death,
" Becauſe I have no Virtue, wanting Choice.
" That only is a Bounty fit for thoſe
" Who 'bey Heav'n's Will by Choice. Conſider then,
" And leave your Crimes in time, before the Hours
" For Mercy paſs away; before Heav'n hides
" Its Face. O! ye deluded Ones, who dream
" Of Peace, when Danger is ſo nigh." 'Twas thus
I paſs'd the Night:
And ne'er till then thought Day return'd too ſoon.
Now let me view the Splendor of the Sun,
That Glorious Light of Heav'n; which Heav'n has made
So wonderful, that in ſome ſort it does
Reſemble Heav'n: For nothing here below
Can live without it.
Tranſporting Thought! to think that it can be
Preſent, at once, to all thoſe diff'rent Nations
Of the World;
Who All are bleſt by its kind Influence.

For he that dwells in *Egypt* views its Beams
Juſt as I now;
And yet, my Soul, thou art more wonderful:
For thus to underſtand is like to Angels;
And, if thou wilt, hereafter ſhall be equal.
If in the little Compaſs of thoſe Walks,
Such ſweet Variety is to be found;
What wou'd accrue, cou'd we ſurvey the World
In all its vaſt Extent, of Earth, and Seas?
View all its different Fruits, and various Flowers,
Beaſts, Birds, and Fiſh?
And ev'ry Thing for Ornament and Uſe,
With all that Story tells, and which Experience
Finds by Merchant's Toil?
Sure Life wou'd be too ſhort to note each Wonder;
And let this next Reflection fill my Soul
With holy Rapture, when I underſtand
How ev'ry Part of this vaſt Globe is fill'd
With Trees and Plants, peculiar to each Clime!
Say, *Athieſt*, how does ſome endure that Sun,
Which wou'd conſume them in a cooler Part,
Whilſt Theſe muſt needs be loſt without ſuch Warmth.
If ſuch Delights are in this fallen State,
What muſt the Joys of *Paradice* have been?
Let me indulge my Fancy in that Thought,
And with Minds Optics view thoſe happy Shades,
Thoſe Bowers of Bliſs, and ever ſpringing Flow'rs,
Where all was Innocence, and Peace and Love;
Where Angels, with Delight, and Wonder, view'd
Man's Happineſs, and his Perfection too.
Then think, my Soul, how great that Bliſs muſt be
That's promis'd to Obedience hereafter!
But That, alas, we cannot underſtand;
But meaſuring Things, Above, by what we ſee,
(By what with Innocence, we here enjoy)

Let this be the Illuſion.
Suppoſing then a pleaſant Space of Ground,
(Larger than what Imagination forms)
Adorn'd with Hills, ſtill riſing as they ſpread,
Where not the ſmalleſt Barrenneſs appears,
But clad in ever-green, and deck'd with Flowers,
And Trees of ev'ry kind:
Fair and Luxuriant All, as Nature e'er
Produc'd, in ev'ry different Quarter of the World:
Where Winter's never ſeen,
But a perpetual Spring does ever bloom;
Where the Sun always ſhines, but never burns:
Where no rough Winds are heard, or Tempeſt comes;
But All's ſerene, and bleſt with gentle Gales,
That breathe ar'matick Ordours all around,
Whoſe bleſt Inhabitants are pleaſing all;
Pleaſing as thoſe whom Blood or Friendſhip joyns.
There, thou ſhall'ſt find all Thoſe whoſe Wiſdom and
Whoſe Virtue, by their Writings, ſhone in the
Defence of Truth. All Thoſe whoſe Goodneſs, by
Their Charity and Suff'rings, were conſpicuous;
Beſides a Multitude, which Time and Diſtance
Render quite unknown.
Theſe All ſhall be thy Intimates for ever,
And joyn with Angels in eternal Praiſe,
With Muſick ſweet, as are their Hymns divine,
Which fill the Soul with Extacy of Bliſs,
With Love and Adoration to the Author
Of thoſe endleſs Joys. Sure he, who thus believes,
And thus deſires (and This is but a Shadow
Of what ſhall be) will need no Hell to fright
Him into Duty. The Fear of looſing thoſe
Immortal Pleaſures muſt needs be ſtrong enough
To make him perſevere in ev'ry Virtue,
'Till he's poſſeſt of all his Soul deſires.

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